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STATE FOR AF/SPG, PRM, AND ALSO PASS USAID/W
USAID FOR DCHA SUDAN TEAM, AF/EA, DCHA
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SUBJECT: Sudan: Kosti Wharf Update

¶1. On April 17, 2006, a USAID IDP advisor visited Kosti, White Nile State, to monitor progress of IDP returns through the Kosti wharf with USAID implementing-partner Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). At the time of the visit, ADRA estimated that the Kosti wharf was operating at half capacity with roughly 400-450 travelers awaiting transportation by barge to Juba or Malakal. The River Transport Corporation (RTC) has not yet published a schedule for barge transport, a factor which is preventing travelers from IDP camps and squatter areas in Khartoum from planning onward movement into Southern Sudan. ADRA is sensitizing returnee populations on the situation at the wharf through both a International Organization for Migration (IOM) public information campaign targeting IDP camps surrounding Khartoum and by sending delegates to major originating areas in White Nile State, including Asalaya. The successful dissemination of information regarding the situation at Kosti wharf has helped to minimize pressure on the wharf's limited capacity.

¶2. RTC finally received 32 barge-pusher engines that were stalled for several weeks in Port Sudan while awaiting customs clearance. The German team of technicians tasked with rehabilitating the pusher engines has arrived in Kosti and begun working to install the engines. Additionally, the Dutch government has partnered with RTC to fund the construction of four new barges. The RTC is also working to build a barge assembly plant at a site in Kosti.

¶3. The IOM-funded ADRA returns monitoring and tracking system is functioning well. ADRA currently employs 24 enumerators to track IDP returns through 12 way stations, covering both road and river transport. In March, ADRA counted 7824 returns, more than double the 3689 people who transited through Kosti to return south in February.

¶4. A recent U.N. World Food Program (WFP) survey revealed that White Nile State is experiencing severe food insecurity. WFP continues to distribute food commodities to Kosti's IDP population on a quarterly basis following the phase-out of ADRA's supplementary feeding program, which was supported by both USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Office of Food For Peace (FFP). WFP plans to provide a general food ration to 41,500 IDPs in Kosti's four IDP

camps from April through July. WFP will also continue to support local supplementary and therapeutic feeding programs in the Kosti and Rebek hospitals.

STEINFELD